

Cultural Competency

The entire program at Goshen High School is moving toward providing opportunities for all students to succeed. For the past five years, all demographic groups have shown upward trend lines in performance. This has been accomplished through initiating various staff development plans and organizational structures.

Student Resource Time—students are assigned a teacher/mentor who becomes their advocate. The student will meet with the same teacher for four years. This teacher will monitor student performance and progress weekly during the entire high school experience. If interventions are needed, this mentor/teacher will assist with putting the intervention in place. The establishment of adult role models is a best practice for the traditionally underserved population.

After Hours Program—teachers are available after school to assist students with their studies. Technology is available to students who may not have it at home. Bus transportation is provided as well. This program addresses particularly the needs of LEP students and poverty students who may not have the home resources available.

Schlechty Working on the Work—staff training in the area of engagement strives to make the school experience for students more meaningful. Teachers measure the engagement level and the level of thinking on various projects. Relevancy and application are important factors for engaging students in learning.

Course-Alike/Data Teams—all teachers and administrators work in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). These groups are synonymously referred to as Course-Alike Teams and Data Teams. Professional development time is provided to teach the goal setting and data collection process. PLCs focus on the learning model and its practical applications.

Support for Students—Our school provides in-class collaboration for students with special needs and for students who are LEP. These tutors assist students with understanding contextual meanings and with directives for completing work. Three hours per week are available for all students. LEP students also have time after school to get help.

Each of these plans requires continual training and updating. Teachers meet together in professional learning communities to assess student progress in the various courses. Examining data determines the needs of students and assists in establishing interventions.

Resources Used

- *Data Driven Decision Making*—Center for Performance Assessment
- *Working on the Work*—Dr. Philip Schlechty
- The Center for Curriculum Mapping—Dr Heidi Hays Jacobs
- *Classroom Instruction That Works*—Marzano
- *Reflective Practice to Improve Schools*—York-Barr
- *Poverty: a Framework for Understanding and Working with Students and Adults from Poverty*—Ruby Payne
- *Creating a Culture of Literacy*: NAASP

- *Building a School of One: One School's Journey*—Kirkton and Lederach

Interventions Specific to the Reading Goal

Table 33: Goal Chart

Goal	All students at Goshen High School will improve their reading comprehension skills.
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers will use best practice reading and writing techniques to increase engagement in the learning process and improve literacy skills • Students who need the extra help will be given additional time and support to improve literacy skills: Freshman Academy, After Hours, Resource Rooms, ENL Double Blocks, Special Education Double Blocks, Collaboration, etc. • Students will be encouraged to take a challenging Core 40 curriculum and use test preparation materials for college entrance preparation • PSAT: All juniors will take it and work on remediation to improve performance on SAT.
Staff Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development activities will include introductions to and support for best practice literacy instruction. GHS will identify and train in-house experts that will develop and support the professional development opportunities in literacy across the curriculum. PLCs will work with in-house experts to learn and implement specific strategies. • GHS will commit time and resources to create opportunities for extra time and support for students who are below level in literacy. PLCs will use release time to work on these options. • Administrators, counselors, and teachers will work with SRT grade level teams to train SRT teachers how to help their SRT students schedule appropriate and challenging classes and use appropriate assessment preparation tools.

Intervention Strategy: Professional Development on Reading Comprehension

The NCA Reading Committee is doing the primary planning for professional development for reaching the reading goal. This committee consists of teachers representing a variety of content areas and a GHS administrator. They spent time at the beginning of the school year examining best practice instruction and working with the staff to identify our current practice and areas of need.

Resources used during the study period included:

- Kylene Beers: *When Kids Can't Read: What Teachers Can Do*
- Chris Tovani and Ellin Keene: *I Read It, But I Don't Get It*
- Jim Burke: *Tools for Thought: Graphic Organizers for Your Classroom*
- Lucy Calkins, Kate Montgomery, and Donna Santman: *A Teacher's Guide to Standardized Reading Tests: Knowledge is Power*
- Steven Zemelman, Harvey Daniels, Arthur Hyde: *Best Practice: Today's Standards for Teaching and Learning in American's School*

- Great Source, Houghton Mifflin Company: *Reader's Handbook: A Student Guide for Reading and Learning*

During the current school year, GHS has provided professional development opportunities to all staff with these outcomes:

- GHS staff became familiar (more familiar) with the standardized tests that our students take (or will take): GQE, PSAT, SAT, ACT, GRE.
- GHS staff identified common tasks and skills required by these tests.
- GHS staff made common commitments to use several basic strategies that can help all students successfully accomplish reading tasks on these tests.
- All GHS staff members gained greater understanding of best practice reading instruction as it is used across grade levels and across content areas in Goshen Community Schools. This was validated through the Data Team process collected during the Cooperative Appraisals or during Goals Only administrator/teacher conferences.
- Course-Alike groups discussed improving reading instruction and develop lessons plans for a data team cycle.

The NCA Leadership (Reading Committee) continues to assess the progress of the staff in acquiring knowledge in best practice reading instruction and in teaching appropriate test-taking skills to all levels of Goshen High School students. They will use the Learning Model process to guide and inform their planning. (Establish essential learning, assess progress, do something about it.)

Intervention Strategy: Structural

As indicated earlier, Goshen High School has created programs and structures that allow students opportunities for extra time and support in all of their academics. (See the section on Cultural Competencies.) These structures will be used to support students in this goal area as well. For example, SRT, After Hours, a newly implemented Freshman Studies, and Freshman Academy all provide opportunities for students to get direct help and instruction. We are also re-organizing administratively for the coming year to have one administrator focus solely on making the freshman year successful for students.

Professional Learning Communities in the form of course-alike teams meet regularly to review the curriculum in their classes, establish essential learning, set student achievement goals, develop common assessments, and plan appropriate lessons and interventions. Course-alike groups will continue to meet to work on these tasks. The course-alike groups also have available paid release time to work at developing best practice reading instruction and course-specific goals related to reading comprehension.

GHS students who do not pass the GQE are required to participate in remediation opportunities. We use a variety of strategies: online remediation, double-up classes in math and English, and courses that emphasize the standards tested on the GQE. This remediation structure will also help students reach the reading goal.

Intervention Strategy: Increasing Participation in Academically Rigorous Classes

Goshen High School is working to increase the academic rigor in all of its classes. This is one of the goal areas of the Smaller Learning Communities Grant. Part of the effort has been an emphasis on increasing student engagement (Working on the Work) and at developing lessons that demand critical thinking. All course-alike teams at Goshen High School have been required to explore how to incorporate these concepts into their lessons. The result is a more engaging and academically rigorous course. We have a large enrollment in advanced placement courses for the coming year and hope to see those numbers grow even more as our honors program and International Baccalaureate program continue to become part of our fabric.

Furthermore, Goshen High School teachers, as they work through the International Baccalaureate application process, have begun to make adjustments to their curricula. In the fall of 2008, a newly developed Honors program began with over 130 freshmen. These students are taking a rigorous two-year course of study that will prepare them for the International Baccalaureate Program, taken during their final two years at GHS. In our second year, there are over 250 students in the 9/10 honors program to go with the nearly 100 juniors taking advanced placement courses.

Besides the IB Diploma, Goshen High School will continue to use the Core 40 as the default diploma and encourage students to earn the Academic Honors diploma.

All of these efforts lead to more rigorous classes and course of study that inevitably require more literacy skills and reading instruction. Furthermore, administrators, counselors, and teachers will work with SRT grade-level teams to train SRT teachers how to help their SRT students schedule appropriate and challenging classes and use appropriate assessment preparation tools, such as "My Road," the online test preparation program provided to students who take the PSAT.

The following table provides information about the professional development plans for the coming three years:

Table 34: Summary of Three-Year Intervention Plans

Assessments

Intervention: Reading comprehension skills will be taught across the curriculum using best practice instruction for student learning.	Persons Accountable	Timeline		Resources	Staff Development Activities
		Beg	End		
Activities to implement the intervention:					
1. Teachers will study and implement best practice reading strategies in order to increase engagement in the learning process and improve reading comprehension skills.	Admin. Team and Leadership Team	2006-2007	On-Going	Staff Development Time, Trained Teachers	Professional development activities will include introductions to and support for best practice reading instruction. GHS will identify and train in-house experts that will develop and support the professional development opportunities in literacy across the curriculum. PLCs will work with in-house experts to learn and implement specific strategies.
2. Students who need the extra help will be given additional time and support to improve reading skills: Freshman Academy, After Hours, Resource Rooms, ENL Double Blocks, Special Education Double Blocks, Collaboration, etc.	Admin., Guidance, Curriculum Council	2003	On-Going	PLCs, SLC Monies, Release Time, Teachers, Support Staff	GHS will commit time and resources to create opportunities for extra time and support for students who are below level in literacy. PLCs will use release time to work on these options
3. Students will be encouraged to take a challenging course of study in order to earn a Core 40, Academic Honors, or IB diploma. They will be trained to use test preparation materials for college entrance preparation.	Admin., Guidance, SRT Committee, and SRT Teachers	2006	On-Going	Staff Development Time, Guidance Counselors and IB Development Funds	Administrators, counselors, and teachers will work with SRT grade level teams to train SRT teachers how to help their SRT students schedule appropriate and challenging classes and to use appropriate assessment preparation tools.
4. The entire corporation will participate with the Marzano group focusing on academic language acquisition.	Admin., Leadership Team	2008	On-Going	Corp. Support, Release Time for Leadership Team	The Leadership team will work closely with school and central administration to implement the Marzano concepts for classroom instruction. Staff development time will be devoted implementation of the Marzano strategies for academic language acquisition.

To measure success in this goal area we will use a variety of primary and secondary assessments. We will also have a locally developed assessment to inform our decision-making process and school change efforts.

Primary Assessments:

- **ISTEP/GQE:** This state sanctioned standardized test is a high stakes test. It is reported in local papers and is the basis for Adequate Yearly Progress as mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act. It is the primary measure for progress of schools and of our NCA reading comprehension goal. **Benchmark for Success/SMART Goal:** We will improve our Overall GQE English/Language Arts test score by 5% from the 2006 score to the 2009 score. This year, the scores increased by 3% and we were given safe harbor.

Secondary Assessments:

- PSAT: Beginning in the 2006-2007 school year, all Goshen High School juniors were required to take this nationally-recognized standardized test. We have established the current school year as a baseline. Benchmark for Success/SMART Goal: We will improve our overall score on Reading by 5% from the 2006-2007 score to the 2009 score.
- GQE Disaggregated: We will continue to disaggregate the GQE data by subgroup. Benchmark for Success/SMART Goal: Our “unlabeled” students will maintain current scores, and all subgroups will increase the English/Language Arts scores by 5% from the 2006 score to the 2009 score. In reviewing this year’s data, we continued to show growth in demographic areas. These results have been presented at several meetings including the Chamber of Commerce and the various service clubs.
- Diploma Types: Nearly 95% of GHS graduates currently earn a Core 40 or Academic Honors Diploma. Benchmark for Success/SMART Goal: We will continue to have at least 95% of our graduates earn the Core 40, Academic Honors, or International Baccalaureate Diploma. Because of timing of this report, this year’s data has not been added. We will continue to follow this effort.
- English 9 Local Assessment: English 9 teachers (ENL English 9, English 9, English 9 Honors, and English 9 GT) will give four common assessments to all freshmen. These assessments follow the format and procedures of a standardized test and cover four focus areas (figurative language, sequential order, chronological order, predicting outcomes, inference, cause and effect, and literary terms). The baseline will be established during the 2006-2007 school year. The English 9 course-alike has set Benchmarks for Success/SMART Goals.
- High School Survey of Student Engagement: This standardized assessment does not specifically measure reading comprehension skills, but GHS staff and administrators will monitor the HSSSE data to inform decision-making and school change efforts. We have traditionally paid for this assessment through grants. At this point grants are not available, but we are continuing to apply for grants that will allow us to resume this assessment.
- Attendance and Graduation Rate: Even though these measures do not specifically measure reading comprehension. Benchmark for Success/SMART Goal: Goshen High School will meet the state-specified goals in these areas by 2009.